

Statement on the International Convention Against Doping in Sport

August 4, 2008

Today I signed the instrument of ratification for the International Convention Against Doping in Sport adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization on October 19, 2005.

This convention is a valuable tool in protecting the integrity of international sport and the health of athletes. The convention advances international cooperation on doping control matters and promotes a drug-free competitive environment for athletes. Ratification of the convention represents the culmination of the longstanding efforts of the international community and the United States to jointly develop an equitable and harmonized approach to antidoping control and enforcement measures in international competition. Importantly, the convention highlights the vital role of youth education, comprehensive drug testing, and research in combating doping.

The timing of the United States ratification, on the eve of the Beijing Olympic games, is appropriate. Over the next several weeks, the world will be focused on the talent and dedication of the world's most accomplished athletes. The convention makes clear that the use of performance-enhancing drugs to gain a competitive advantage undercuts the positive attributes of sport.

I remain particularly concerned that doping sends to young people the message that performance is more important than character and health. As a result, my administration has aggressively pursued education campaigns, research, and drug testing, as well as cooperation among public and private partners to encourage clean, fair, and healthy sport competition. These efforts have coincided with a significant decline in the number of young people using performance-enhancing drugs.

The challenges posed by doping must also be addressed by international cooperation and collaboration. By ratifying the convention, the United States is demonstrating its continued commitment and leadership in working with the international community to combat this public health issue.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea in Seoul, South Korea

August 6, 2008

President Lee. Mr. President, Mrs. Bush, as well as your lovely daughter, Barbara Bush, I would like to welcome you from the bottom of our hearts. Yes, well, Mr. President, the majority of the Korean people have been eagerly waiting for your visit to Korea this time, and as you saw yesterday, there were many people who gathered together to welcome your visit to Korea.

President Bush. Thank you.

President Lee. And also, Mr. President, yesterday in the lawn in front of the Seoul City Hall, there were many people gathered there, thousands of people gathered, who came together to pray, not only for your visit but also for the future of the Korea-U.S. relationship as well.

And of course, behind those people, there were those who were sort of opposed. [Laughter] But, however, the number was minimal, sir.

President Bush. Thank you.

President Lee. Yes, well, Mr. President, I don't need to reiterate the fact that Korea and the United States, we are traditional allies and friends for many, many years. And also, it's been only a little over 5 months since I assumed the Presidency, but today is already our third meeting, Mr. President. So, officially, but as well as personally, I have deep friendship for you and for the people of America, and I believe in the future of the Korea-U.S. relationship.

And as you saw, Mr. President, the weather today is beautiful. We had rain coming, torrential rain coming up until about 2 days ago. Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. President. Laura and I are delighted to be with you and Mrs. Kim again. Ours is a vital relationship. And our three meetings will only strengthen the relationship. I admire your forthrightness, your integrity, and your deep love for the people of Korea.

And I enjoy coming to a free society, where people are able to express their opinions. And your country is a free society. So,